

Love in a Hurry

By GELETT BURGESS
Illustrated by Ray Walters

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SYNOPSIS.

Hall Bonistelle, artist-photographer, prepares for the day's work in his studio. Flodie Fisher, his assistant, reminds him of a party he is to give in the studio that night. Mr. Doremus, attorney, calls and informs Hall that his Uncle John's will has left him \$100,000 on condition that he marry before his twenty-eighth birthday, which begins at midnight that night. Mrs. Rena Roylton calls at the studio. Hall asks her to marry him. She agrees to give him an answer at the party that night. Miss Carolyn Dally calls. Hall proposes to her. She agrees to give him an answer at the party. Rosamund Gale, art model, calls. Hall tries to rush her into an immediate marriage. She, too, defers her answer until the evening. Flodie tries to show Hall a certain way out of the mixup, but he is obtuse. Jonas Hagginsbury, heir to the millions in case Hall fails to marry on time, plots with Flodie to block Hall's marriage to any of the three women before midnight. Flodie arranges to have the three meet at the studio as if by chance. Carolyn, Rosamund and Mrs. Roylton come in and much feminine fencing ensues, in which Flodie uses her own foil adroitly.

CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

Mrs. Roylton looked up through big teary eyes. "Why," she said faintly, "you see, well I didn't give him a definite answer, really. That is, not exactly—I said—"

"She said she'd tell him later!" the two girls cried in unison, as if they had rehearsed it. "Tonight!" Rosamund added, and Carolyn, "Didn't you, now, Rena?"

Mrs. Roylton nodded tremulously. "How did you know?"

"Oh!" Carolyn shouted, "how did I know! Oh, I know, all right!" She blew a kiss to Rosamund. "You couldn't quite believe him, and so you couldn't decide. And you're to give him your answer tonight when you come to his unnatural old party! Is that right?"

"Well, he must have wanted me most, anyway," said Rena, drying her tears. "He proposed to me first!"

Carolyn held up her hand. "Second thoughts are always best! Meaning—me!"

"He changed his mind, though," Rosamund protested. "He proposed to me last!"

Carolyn grinned at her. "Why, he might just as well have counted us out, like playing tag to see who's it!" She pointed to each in turn, calling out, "My—mother—told—me—to—take—this—one!" The last was Rosamund.

"No, thanks!" Rosamund resumed. "I don't intend to be it!" She dropped her voice a little, glancing at the door. "Why, you ought to hear what Miss Fisher has been telling me about the business here! Why, it seems Mr. Bonistelle's awfully hard up—barely paying expenses—all sorts of unpaid bills piling up, too. He may have to move over to Sixth avenue, even! Hasn't he got a nerve, though?"

Mrs. Roylton rose like a Spartan, determined, hard. "Girls, I know what I'm going to do! I intend to tell him just what I think of him, and send him packing!"

"There!" Carolyn interposed. "Now, you're talking, Rena! Let's get down to business, and decide what to do. We're all in the same fix and we must hold together."

"Yes, we ought to take a stand," Rena agreed.

"And Hall ought to take a tumble!" from Rosamund.

"See here, let's do this thing according to Hoyle," said Carolyn, taking the lead with all her humor. "First

thing is, are we one and all agreed to reject him tonight?"

"Yes!" Mrs. Roylton and Rosamund came in chorus.

"Well, then," said Carolyn. "I promise, as well. Hope to die!" She crossed herself. "Now, this is a serious thing, ladies. No one of us can go back on our word. It must be one—two—three—and out for H. Bonistelle. Well, that's agreed. Now for the details—"

"Oh, I simply can't wait to tell him!" exclaimed Mrs. Roylton. "I hate the man!"

"So do I!" growled Rosamund. "I think he ought to be horsewhipped!"

"Well," said Carolyn, "I must say I agree with you both. I consider Hall Bonistelle is a perfectly conceived and admirably rendered cad!"

CHAPTER IX.

He came in with a smile, but, at first glimpse of his visitors, it faded swiftly into a look of terror. But Hall was game; he pulled himself together and smiled again. It was with a fairly creditable expression of affability that he exclaimed: "Well, this is an unexpected pleasure!" He went from one to another offering his hand, then he drew off his gloves and looked his guests over anxiously. The atmosphere was like that before a thunderstorm.

Then he drew a breath of sudden relief. Flodie was entering. Flodie was smiling. Seeing that smile, he seemed to come to himself, as if after a disturbing dream.

"Oh!" said Flodie, "are you back already? I was so busy I didn't hear you."

"Yes, I forgot my watch. You know I've got to have it repaired. I'll get it now." He turned to the ladies with a new enthusiasm. "I'm awfully sorry I'm in such a hurry, but I've got a lot to do this afternoon."

Flodie appeared nervous. "Miss Gale is waiting for me to do her proofs, you know," she said. "I've finished the others, Mr. Bonistelle. I think the ladies will excuse you; I can attend to them, all right!" She walked slowly back to the stockroom, giving him a meaning glance as she left.

"Oh, yes, don't wait, Mr. Bonistelle," said Mrs. Roylton.

"Well, I'll have to go then, I suppose. Make yourselves quite at home, ladies; I'll be back in a minute." He left impatiently.

Carolyn thought a moment. "Say, we've got so much to talk over, we can't discuss it here. Hall may be back any moment. I'll tell you. Wait a moment!" She walked up to the stockroom door and opened it. "Miss Fisher!" she called.

Flodie appeared, wondering what she could be wanted for.

"I say, Miss Fisher, couldn't we go into the reception room for a while? We've got some things to talk over. About the party tonight, you know."

"Why certainly," was Flodie's reply. "The studio's being decorated, but the reception room is all ready, and nobody will disturb you. Go right in."

"Come on!" said Carolyn, turning to the other ladies. "We'll have it out right now, and decide on everything." She led the way in.

Hardly had they disappeared when Flodie emerged again. She took a step toward the door they had left ajar, and listened. Then she sat down at her desk, smiling.

"So far, so good!" she thought. Her scheme had worked perfectly. It was not for nothing that Flodie had watched women, laughed at them, analyzed them and filed them away in her mind. But now, what? Was she any nearer to getting Hall for herself? Doubtfully she considered her prospects. She was as intensely concentrated on the effort as the tiger waiting to leap on her prey. All to be seen of it, however, was a little, quaint,

gray-eyed girl pathetically bending over her accounts.

It was not many minutes before Hall came in, thoughtfully winding a gold watch. He looked about, surprised.

"Where are they? Gone?"

"Oh, no," said Flodie. "In there!" She nodded toward the reception room.

Hall walked toward the door and looked in. Flodie watched him sharply. "Say," he said finally, turning to her, "there are three mighty nice girls, did you know it?"

"H'm," mumbled Flodie.

"They're all so sweet—by Jove, I hardly know which one I like best!" he went on. "They're charming; don't you think so?"

Flodie was very busy writing in a little book. "Yes," she said without looking up.

"No, but really, Flo!"

"Oh, yes; really."

"By Jove, I hardly know which one I do like best!" Hall peeped into the reception room again curiously, through a narrow slit in the doorway.

"Well, you can't marry them all, can you?" Flodie looked up now, biting the end of her penholder viciously.

"No, that's the deuce of it. I almost wish I could."

"Mr. Bonistelle!"

"Well, then, I've got to jilt two of them. I wonder which one will be



"Oh, dear! What was it about?"

the lucky girl! Of course it all depends upon what they say to me tonight."

He stopped suddenly and turned to Flodie. "Say, what are they talking about in there, anyway?"

"Oh, I don't know. Clothes, I guess," Flodie held her breath.

"By jove!" His face changed swiftly. "Oh, pshaw, though, nice girls don't go about telling their love affairs, do they? What the deuce are you laughing at?"

"Oh, no!" said Flodie. "Nice girls never get as intimate as that. On all subjects that concern the heart, Mr. Bonistelle, women are invariably as silent as the grave!"

He looked hard at her. "That's evidently sarcasm. Say, I'm worried!" He walked anxiously back to the door and looked in again. "By Jove," he exclaimed, "this is getting on my nerves. Lord, if they should find out! See here, what were they talking about while they were in here waiting? D'you know?"

She looked up ingenuously, and replied, "Oh, I was in the stockroom, printing proofs. They were all alone here in the office."

"Well, I wish to goodness you had listened. I'd hate to lose four millions of dollars on account of them. See here, Flo, I can't stand this. I feel as if I were smoking a pipe on top of a barrel of gunpowder. There may be an explosion any minute. You can't tell what may touch it off—why,

a single word, perhaps. I'm not going to leave until they're out of here. I don't care how long they stay! I don't dare to, till I see what happens. I'll go into my room now, and you call me when they're gone, will you?" He waited on the threshold of the studio.

Flodie nodded assent. "All right!"

"And," he continued, "if anything breaks, you give me the tip and I'll get out the back way!" He left, grinning sardonically.

As soon as he had gone Flodie rose and tiptoed to the half-open door. She watched and listened, now, with far more interest than she had displayed before Hall. Inside, the voices rose and fell in animated conversation: Mrs. Roylton's always sentimental and reproachful, Carolyn's high and merry, Rosamund's a surly contralto note. Flodie's face changed from hope to fear, from hatred to mirth. She was so absorbed in the scene that she did not notice when the hall door opened, and Mr. Smallish entered, bearing a newspaper.

He stared at her, then coughed. Flodie whirled round and faced him. "Oh!" she stammered. "How you frightened me, Alfred!"

"I beg your pardon, Miss Fisher. But say, did you know what they got in the paper about Mr. Bonistelle?" He displayed an afternoon edition.

Impatiently, Flodie snatched the sheet from his hands. "Oh, dear! What was it about?"

At this minute the three ladies entered the room, all talking at once. At sight of Flodie and Alfred they grew silent.

"Why, it said how Mr. Bonistelle had inherited—"

"Oh, never mind!" Flodie exclaimed excitedly. "That's a lie, anyway." She tried to carry the paper to her desk, glancing terrified at the ladies.

"What is it?" Carolyn demanded. "Is there something about Mr. Bonistelle in the paper?"

Alfred bowed. "Yes, miss, he's come into a lot of money, it seems—"

"Alfred!" cried Flodie, "you go downstairs and see if those ice-cream freezers have come yet."

"Yes'm!" Then he turned again to Carolyn. "It was on condition he—"

Flodie in her excitement had dropped the paper. Quick as a hawk, Carolyn picked it up. She scanned it swiftly. "Here it is!" she cried in triumph. "Eccentric Millionaire's Queer Bequest—Nephew Will Get Four Millions if Married in Haste—A Good Chance for Some Nice Girl. Well, isn't that disgusting!"

"Go on!" cried Rosamund and Mrs. Roylton angrily.

"Hall Bonistelle, the well-known photographer at No. 555 Fifth avenue—"

"Goodness! It is Hall, isn't it?" Mrs. Roylton exclaimed.

"Oh, for heaven's sake, shut up!" from Rosamund.

"555 Fifth avenue, will have to do his wooing in a hurry if he wishes to capture the legacy left him by a rich and eccentric uncle, the late John Beasley Bonistelle of Central Park West. As the residuary legatee, the nephew is promised something over four million dollars, on condition of his being married on or before his twenty-eighth birthday. As this occurs tomorrow, Mr. Bonistelle has a scant forty-eight hours in which to make good, and unless he has already picked his bride—"

"Let me see it!" Rosamund whipped the paper out of Carolyn's hand, and devoured the notice with her own eyes.

"What did it say, 'by his twenty-eighth birthday'?" Mrs. Roylton asked in great anxiety.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Zero in Securities.

The corporation of foreign bondholders at London, recently reciting defaulted public debts not yet settled, gravely includes the bonds of the Confederate States of America, of which the principal is given in the report at \$12,000,000 and "accrued interest," as \$41,905,710.

I am looking for somebody in the service of the government to whom I may properly submit this scheme.

Ike was advised to go down to the navy yard and tell it to the marines.

Famous Flower Market.

Rio de Janeiro is noted for its flower market, which is but a short distance from the point where every train in the city passes. This market is kept entirely by men in European clothes—Portuguese-speaking individuals who seem to have inherited the Portuguese love of flowers. The most magnificent dahlias I have ever seen were in the shops of Sao Paulo, Brazil.—Exchange.

Chinese Salt Wells.

Salt wells in China have been operated for hundreds of years, and in the Tzelinching district, especially, have built up a prosperous community. In some cases the wells are 300 feet deep. The salt is obtained in the form of brine, which is raised in bamboo tubes by means of crude derricks, the motive power for which is furnished by water buffaloes.

DOG FISH TRAINED FOR WAR

"Ike the Inventor" Offers Them to the Government to Bark at Submarines.

A man who described himself as Isaac Blake, better known as "Ike the Inventor," walked into the Brooklyn borough hall, says the New York World, and unfolded a brand new scheme for protecting American ships from attack by submarines.

"I live down at Hook Creek," said Ike, "and I own a lot of dogfish, which I have tamed and trained. If the government will hire them, I will send out a pack of my sea hounds to escort any American vessel bound for the war zone. When the ship reaches there, my trained dogfish will go ahead of her scouting for submarines. Spotting an undersea boat, they will come to the surface and bay lustily."

"The man on the bridge, thus warned of danger, will change the course of his ship so as to elude the submarine. To prevent the submarine from following its prey, my dogfish will bite and otherwise harry it until it is driven off."

Table Takes Root in Yard.

S. S. Wisser of Reading, Pa., had a unique experience with a willow wood table which he placed in his yard several weeks ago. From this experience he is convinced that the year 1915 will bring bumper crops. Wisser discovered a few days ago that the table had sprouted and had begun to bud and shoot. When he tried to remove the piece of furniture he found that the four legs had taken root in the soil and the table is now a part of the vegetation of the yard. Should he now wish to remove the table he will have to dig.

Uncle Eben.

"Dar wouldn't be so much need of an S. P. C. A.," said Uncle Eben, "if human folks was as patient an' forbearin' towards an animal as dey is towards machinery."

The Difference.

A woman glances into a mirror to confirm her impression that she looks all right; a man stares into one in order to bluff himself into thinking he does.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

SPOKE ONLY SIMPLE TRUTH

Dog's Owner Not to Blame if Man With Whom He Traded Had Misunderstood Him.

Senator William H. Thompson of Kansas smiled when reference at a recent banquet was made to sharp practice in trading. He said he was reminded of Jim Jones' dog.

Jim Jones had a hound dog, and having an opportunity to trade him for a shotgun with a party from the next county, he lost no time in making the swap. It was a month later before the traders met again.

"Look here, you bloomin' possum!" cordially greeted the man from the next county. "You didn't do a thing but sting me on that pup!"

"Sting you!" returned Jim, with an innocent look. "In what way?"

"You know!" wrathfully exclaimed the man from the next county. "You told me that he would lick anything in sight."

"So he will," declared Jim, with a pleasant smile. "He is a very affectionate animal."

FARMER'S WIFE TOO ILL TO WORK

A Weak, Nervous Sufferer Restored to Health by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Kasota, Minn. — "I am glad to say that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done more for me than anything else, and I had the best physician here. I was so weak and nervous that I could not do my work and suffered with pains low down in my right side for a year or more. I took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and now I feel like a different person. I believe there is nothing like Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for weak women and young girls, and I would be glad if I could influence anyone to try the medicine, for I know it will do all and much more than it is claimed to do." — Mrs. CLARA FRANKS, R. F. D. No. 1, Maplecrest Farm, Kasota, Minn.



Women who suffer from those distressing ills peculiar to their sex should be convinced of the ability of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to restore their health by the many genuine and truthful testimonials we are constantly publishing in the newspapers.

If you have the slightest doubt that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help you, write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass., for advice. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman, and held in strict confidence.

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